



## A Short History Of Martinism And The Martinist Orders

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### First of all, what is Martinism?

#### Ancient Martinism

Martinism is a system of philosophic thought, essentially Christian in outlook and tradition, which is chiefly based on the doctrinal tenets of a work called: Treatise on the Re-Integration of Beings in their Original Virtues. Powers and Qualities, by a Frenchman of Spanish extraction named Martinez Pasquales. This work gives a particular interpretation of Creation, of the Hierarchy of Beings, the Fall of Man and of the way for Man to regain his original status in the scheme of things, so as to be re-established in his initial privileges. Martinez Pasquales considers Man to be in exile in this earthly existence, deprived of his real powers.

Man's main aim must be, therefore, to work at becoming restored to the condition that was his originally. This he can achieve by following a certain technique which constitutes the secret part of Martinez' doctrine. He taught this technique in the Temples of a secret society founded by him: the Order of Elus-Cohen, or Elect Priests, from the ranks of high-degree freemasons. Two members of this Order were to play an important part in the development of Martinism: Louis Claude de Saint-Martin and Jean-Baptiste Willermoz.

Saint-Martin in particular was to create a modified version of Martinism of a more contemplative character than that of Pasquales, whose secretary he was for a time. Saint-Martin was for many years an ardent Elu-Cohen. However he gradually moved away from the technique used by his Brothers to achieve their re-integration, a technique that involved certain theurgic practices (ceremonial magic.) His personal preferences turned to a search for a more spiritual means to achieve the same result. He thus developed what is known in Martinist terminology as the "Inner Way" of Reintegration. Eventually, Saint-Martin left the Elus-Cohen to follow his own path. He came under other influences. Progressively, he became a teacher, having followers or disciples to whom, he taught the "inner Way." While an active Elu-Cohen, he had published several works under the pen name of the "Unknown Philosopher." A loose organization built itself around him, formed of people who had received a special Initiation from him. After his death, his disciples carried on the transmission of this Initiation, on a person-to-person basis.

Jean-Baptiste Willermoz was a keen freemason. He became the leader of the Elus-Cohen of Lyons. At the death of Martinez Pasquales, the Order of Elus-Cohen slowly began to disintegrate. Sensing this, Willermoz decided to save what he could of the Martinist Tradition by incorporating it in the more viable freemasonic fraternity. He was instrumental in the reformation of French Templar Masonry, an offshoot of the German 'Order of Strict Observance'. This reformed rite of masonry took the name "Ordre des Chevaliers Bienfaisants de La Cite Sainte" (Order of Knights, Beneficent, of the Holy City) generally known in short as "C.: B.: C.: S.:". Willermoz received authority to introduce two secret degrees, summarizing the teachings of Martinez into the Order. The French Revolution was to thwart him. The "Knights Beneficent" have survived to this day in the Scottish Rectified Rite of France and Switzerland and in the Martinist Grand Priory and Priories. Meanwhile, the Temples of the Elus-Cohen had fallen into inactivity although small groups continued to operate privately.

We thus come to the end of what we could call "Ancient' Martinism. The similarity of names between Martinez and Saint-Martin has led to much confusion as to whose followers were, and still are Martinists. The answer is quite simple: both. Their respective followers share the same doctrinal concept: the Divine Glory of Man's Origins, and the same aim: to regain that glorious Divinity. Only their methods differ, some following the technique of evocations, the others that of inner Guidance and Illumination (The Inner Way.)

#### Modern Martinism

We may consider that Modern Martinism dates from the creation of the Martinist Order in its present form by Papus, shortly before 1890. We said that Saint-Martin's followers were loosely grouped in a flexible organization and carried on the transmission of the Initiation that descended through Saint-Martin. This organization was known under different names but more generally as the "Societe des Initiés."

Now, among many others, Saint-Martin had Initiated the Abbe de Lanoue and Chaptol, Comte de Chanteloup. These two Brothers in turn transmitted the Initiation, creating two lines of



Initiatic Succession leading, one to Dr. Gerard Encausse, (Papus), and the other to P. Augustin Chaboseau. These two Brothers were in the habit of lunching with friends in Paris and, in the course of discussions they discovered each other as Initiates of Saint-Martin. Papus then decided to create an organization, which would group the Initiates of Saint-Martin and promote the study of Martinist philosophy. For reasons that we shall study later, Papus and Augustin Chaboseau exchanged their Initiations. Papus then proceeded with initiating the future members of the organization he had in mind. In 1884, the Constitution of that organization was drafted and it was given the name "Ordre Martiniste". By 1890, the work of establishing the Order was so well advanced that it was decided to give it a ruling body of twelve members, to be known as the Supreme Council. Papus, as Grand Master of the Order, was President of this Supreme Council. In 1893, the Ordre Martiniste received the archives and records of Willermoz and the Cohen Temple of Lyons.

Under Papus' lead, the Martinist Order spread rapidly in France and in other countries, even in Russia where a Martinist Lodge operated at the Court of the Czar Nicholas II. By 1916, when Papus died, there were 160 active Lodges in existence. During the lifetime of Papus, other Martinist lines of succession had been claimed. Thus, in the United States, Dr. Edward Blitz claimed descent from the Elus-Cohen and contacted Papus. He was appointed head of the Martinist Order for the United States, until his Charter was withdrawn because he was altering the spirit of the Order. He was replaced by Sister Margaret B. Peeke, who was appointed "Inspectrice Generale" for the U.S.A. She died in 1908.

Papus died in 1916 and with the absence of his enlightened guidance, the Martinist Order was soon to become divided. Papus was succeeded by Bro:: Charles Detre, better known as Teder. Because of the war, the activity of the Order was somewhat curtailed. Teder was assisted by Bro:: Victor Blanchard, Deputy Grand-Master. Teder was a keen freemason of the Memphis-Mizraim Rites. Under his Grand-Mastership the Order began to acquire a Masonic outlook. Teder died in 1918, leaving Bro:: Blanchard as Grand-Master designate. Because of the Masonic tendencies of which he disapproved, Bro:: Blanchard declined the Grand-Mastership and Bro:: Jean Bricaud was duly appointed to office. Bro:: Bricaud considered that the Martinist Order would gain in stability by being organized on a Masonic basis. He altered the Constitutions of the Order and decided to admit as Martinists only Masons of the Third Degree (Master Mason) of any Rite. The headquarters of the Order were transferred to Lyons.

All Martinists did not accept this departure from the original Constitution, particularly as the Masonic requirement kept the Sisters out of the Order. Those who did not approve of Bricaud's directions carried on with the work in the spirit of the original constitution, acting as "Free Initiators." They remained unorganized for a time but eventually Bro:: Victor Blanchard, Deputy Grand Master under Teder, decided to gather all those Martinists who adhered to the original Constitution into a new organization which would not impose the Masonic prerequisite for membership. He became the Grand Master of this branch of the Martinist Order, sometimes referred to as the "free" branch, as distinct from the "Masonic" branch.

In 1934, an International Convention of Martinists was held at Brussels. Bro. Blanchard was unanimously elected Universal Sovereign Grand Master and it was decided the Order would be known as the "Ordre Martiniste et Synarchique" to distinguish it from the Masonic "Ordre Martiniste" whose headquarters were in Lyons. In 1934 also, a federation of esoteric societies was created under the name of the F.U.D.O.S.I.. Bro. Blanchard was one of the first three Heads or "Imperators" of that organization.

Unfortunately, there arose a conflict of personalities; some Martinists, of which Augustin Chaboseau was one, did not want to support Bro. Blanchard. They formed yet another Order, the "Ordre Martiniste Traditionnel" of which Bro. V. E. Micholet was first Grand Master. He was succeeded by Bro. Augustin Chaboseau. Bro. Chaboseau was also to succeed Bro. Blanchard as Imperator in the F.U.D.O.S.I. when the latter withdrew. The situation was to remain unchanged until the Second World War. There were now, to sum up, three branches of the Martinist Order:

1. The "Ordre Martiniste", headed by Bro. Chevillon who succeeded Bro. Bricaud in 1934. This branch admitted Master Masons only and became generally known as "Ordre Martiniste de Lyon" because its headquarters were in Lyons.
2. The "Ordre Martiniste et Synarchique", headed by Bro. Victor Blanchard, of Paris, not very numerous in France, but well established in Switzerland.
3. The "Ordre Martiniste Traditionnel", headed by Bro. Augustin Chaboseau, well established in France.

During the war, the Nazis persecuted Masonic and similar organizations. Bro. Chevillon, Sovereign Grand Master of the "Ordre Martiniste de Lyon" was assassinated in 1944. When the war ended, he was succeeded by Bro. Henri Dupont. With the return of peace, the Martinist Orders once again sprang into activity. In 1946, Augustin Chaboseau, Grand Master of the "Ordre Martiniste Traditionnel", died. The Grand Master designate, Jean Chaboseau, Augustin's son, was not confirmed in his appointment by the Supreme Council of that Order. Controversy

arose and many members resigned from the Supreme Council of the "Ordre Martiniste Traditionnel". Jean Chaboseau then pronounced the dissolution of this Order and withdrew from Martinism in 1947. Some members tried to hold the Order together and an interim committee of the F.U.D.O.S.I. called the "Regency Council" held the Grand Mastership in abeyance. The Order had disintegrated however and when the F.U.D.O.S.I. dissolved itself in 1951, its interim committee disappeared and with it the Ordre Martiniste Traditionnel, with its Supreme Council, ceased to exist. There was left, however, a branch in the U.S.A. where Bro. Lewis had been appointed Regional Grand Master for "California and the United States of America" (sic). This branch has survived and functions under the wing of a California Rosicrucian correspondence school. Unfortunately, it resorts to practices such as "postal initiation" which is repugnant to tradition and which practice impairs the regularity of its membership in the eyes of Martinists everywhere, who have shut it out.

In 1948, Bro. Jules Boucher, one of the members of Augustin Chaboseau's Supreme Council attempted to gather surviving members of the Ordre Martiniste Traditionnel in another Order, which he called "Ordre Martiniste Rectifie". His success was limited and when he died in 1955, he was not succeeded as Grand Master of that Order.

With the disappearance of the Ordre Martiniste Traditionnel and the limited success of the Ordre Martiniste Rectifie, there were a large number of unattached Martinists in France. It is then that Dr. Philippe Encausse, the son of Papus, decided to revive the "Ordre Martiniste" according to the constitution of Papus. In 1951, this Order became officially active with Supreme Council headed by Bro. Philippe Encausse as Sovereign Grand Master. Its development continues to progress well and it is at present (1985) the largest of the Martinist Orders in existence. Bro. Philippe Encausse died in 1984 and the Order is presently headed by Bro. Emilio Lorenzo.

On March 14th, 1953, Bro. Victor Blanchard, Sovereign Universal Grand Master of the Ordre Martiniste et Synarchique died in Paris, aged 75. He was succeeded by Sar Alkmaion (Dr. Edward Bertholet) of Switzerland. It was from him that the present Grand Master of the Britannic Grand Lodge (Grand Lodge of England), received his Charter as Sovereign Delegate

General for Britain and the Commonwealth. In 1985, Bro. Henri Dupont, Sovereign Grand Master of the "Ordre Martiniste de Lyon"; Bro. Philippe Encausse, Sovereign Grand Master of the "Ordre Martiniste"; and Bro. Robert Ambelain, Sovereign Grand Master of the "Ordre Martiniste des Elus-Cohen," a Martinist organization of a slightly different nature perpetuating the Elu-Cohen tradition through a line descended from Willermoz via the 'Knights Beneficent of the Holy City' (C. .B. .C. .S.), formed a federation called the "Union des Ordres Martinistes" with its See in Paris. France. The purpose of this Federation was to reunite the various branches of the Martinist Order which have remained faithful to Tradition into a flexible organization that leaves their entire freedom of operation to the member-Orders, while forging ever stronger links between them. Upon the creation of this Federation, the "Ordre Martiniste de Lyon" changed its name to "Ordre Martiniste Martineziste."

In September 1959, the Britannic Grand Lodge of the Ordre Martiniste et Synarchique established fraternal relations with the Union des Ordres Martinistes and some 12 months later it officially joined the Federation. While retaining its autonomy of operation, the Britannic Grand Lodge entered into full communion with the other Orders of the "Union" which it officially represents in the territories of Great Britain and the Commonwealth.

In the night of 1st/2nd October, 1960, Bro. Henri Dupont, Sovereign Grand Master of the Ordre Martiniste-Martineziste (formerly Ordre Martiniste de Lyon), passed away. He had previously taken steps to leave his succession to Bro. Philippe Encausse. Two Martinist Orders were thus placed under the common Sovereign Grand Mastership of Bro. Encausse, and a further step was taken on the way to Martinist Unity.

On the 6th October 1960, Sar Gulion, Grand Master of the Britannic Grand Lodge was ordained by Bro. Robert Ambelain into the Ordre Martiniste des Elu-Cohen to the Degrees of:

- Grand-Master Cohen, Ap:: Reau +
- Chevalier d'Orient, C:: Reau +
- Commandeur d'Orient, M:: Reau +

On 30th November 1960 Sar Gulion was made Delegate General of the Elus-Cohen for Great Britain.

In September 1982, a Brother, journeying from Barbados, West Indies, was received in London and on the 8th day of that month was Initiated into the Martinist Order by Sar Gulion and ordained as an Unknown Philosopher. This Brother, Sar Inspirator Lucis, was given a patent empowering him "to found and rule and control, on the Isle of Barbados in the West Indies, Lodges and Heptads of the Martinist Order that have been regularly authorized and warranted by the Sovereign Tribunal of the Britannic Grand Lodge." On the 12th day of November, 1982, Lodge Empress was inaugurated in Barbados and thus the Light reached the English-speaking



West Indies.

Returning to London in September 1985, Sar Inspirator Lucis was again received by Sar Gulion who conferred upon him the Ordinations of the Elu-Cohen, which he had himself received. To mark this occasion Sar Inspirator Lucis changed his Nomen Mysticum to Sar Savitar, on September 25th 1985. At this time discussions were held about the erection of the present Provincial Lodge of Barbados to the stains of Sovereign Grand Lodge. This date has been fixed for Easter, 1986. A more detailed history of the Order will be given in serial form later. Such is the position this 26th day of October, 1985.

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